

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE
U.S. EMBASSY BUCHAREST, PUBLIC DIPLOMACY SECTION (PDS)
Notice of Funding Opportunity

Funding Opportunity Title: U.S. Embassy Bucharest PDS Annual Program Statement
Funding Opportunity Number: PDS-Bucharest-FY23-01
Deadline for Applications: (1) March 31, 2023; (2) July 31, 2023
Assistance Listing Number: 19.040 – Public Diplomacy Programs
Maximum for Each Award: \$15000

A. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The U.S. Embassy Bucharest Public Diplomacy Section (PDS) of the U.S. Department of State is pleased to announce that funding is available through its Public Diplomacy Small Grants Program. This is an Annual Program Statement outlining our funding priorities, strategic themes, and procedures for submitting requests for funding.

Purpose of Small Grants: PDS Bucharest invites proposals for projects that **strengthen cultural ties between the United States and Romania** through cultural and exchange programming that highlights shared values and promotes bilateral cooperation. All projects must include an American cultural element, or connection with American expert/s, organization/s, or institution/s in a specific field that will promote increased understanding of U.S. policy and perspectives.

Priority Program Areas:

- Further regional and international peace and security
 - media literacy
 - counter disinformation, misinformation, fake news
 - cybersecurity education
- Promote Euro-Atlantic standards of democracy, rule of law and minority inclusion
 - rule of law
 - democracy
 - human rights, non-discrimination
 - minority inclusion
 - women's empowerment
 - civic education
 - civic participation
 - trafficking in persons prevention
 - free, independent, and responsible press
 - youth leadership
- Economic prosperity
 - entrepreneurship promotion
 - energy security

Examples of PDS Small Grants Program projects include, but are not limited to:

- Academic and professional lectures, seminars, and speaker programs
- Artistic and cultural workshops, joint performances, and exhibitions
- Cultural heritage conservation and preservation programs
- Professional and academic exchanges and programs
- NGO projects promoting shared United States - Romania values

The following types of projects are not eligible for funding:

- Projects relating to partisan political activity
- Charitable or development activities
- Construction projects
- Projects that support specific religious activities
- Fund-raising campaigns
- Lobbying for specific legislation or projects
- Scientific research
- Projects intended primarily for the growth or institutional development of the organization; or
- Projects that duplicate existing programs.

Authorizing legislation, type, and year of funding:

Funding authority rests in the Smith-Mundt Act. The source of funding is FY2023 Public Diplomacy Funding.

B. FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION

Length of performance period: 6 to 12 months

Number of awards anticipated: 10 awards (dependent on amounts)

Award amounts: awards may range from a minimum of \$5000 to a maximum of \$15000

Total available funding: \$100000

Type of Funding: Fiscal Year 2023 Public Diplomacy Funding

Call for Fiscal Year 2023 award (grant) proposals is launched on October 1, 2022

This notice is subject to availability of funding.

Funding Instrument Type: Grant, Fixed Amount Award

Project Performance Period: Proposed projects should be completed in 12 months or less. PDS will entertain applications for continuation grants funded under these awards beyond the initial budget period on a non-competitive basis subject to availability of funds, satisfactory progress of the project, and a determination that continued funding would be in the best interest of the U.S. Department of State.

C. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

1. Eligible Applicants

The Public Diplomacy Section encourages applications from Romania and the United States:

- Registered not-for-profit organizations, including think tanks and civil society/non-governmental organizations with programming experience
- Non-profit or governmental educational and cultural institutions

For-profit or commercial entities, as well as governmental departments are not eligible to apply.

Proposed projects must be implemented in Romania.

2. Cost Sharing or Matching

Cost sharing is not required.

3. Other Eligibility Requirements

Applicants are only allowed to submit one proposal per organization. If more than one proposal is submitted from an organization, all proposals from that institution will be considered ineligible for funding.

In order to be eligible to receive an award, all organizations must have a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI), and a valid registration on www.SAM.gov. Please see Section D.3 for information on how to obtain these registrations.

D. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

1. Address to Request Application Package

Application forms required below are available at <https://ro.usembassy.gov/education-culture/nofo/>

2. Content and Form of Application Submission

Please follow all instructions below carefully. Proposals that do not meet the requirements of this announcement or fail to comply with the stated requirements will be ineligible.

Content of Application

Please ensure:

- The proposal clearly addresses the goals and objectives of this funding opportunity
- All documents are in English
- All budgets are in U.S. dollars
- All pages are numbered
- All documents are formatted to A4 paper, and
- All Microsoft Word documents are single-spaced, 12-point Times New Roman font, with a minimum of 1-inch margins.

The following documents are **required**:

- Application format for Grant (Word document)
- Application for Federal Assistance SF424 Organization (Sample)
- Budget Information SF424A
- Budget Instructions SF424A
- Organization Assurances SF424B

2. Proposal (5 pages maximum): The proposal should contain sufficient information that anyone not familiar with it would understand exactly what the applicant wants to do. You may use your own proposal format, but it must include all the items below.

- **Proposal Summary:** Short narrative that outlines the proposed program, including program objectives and anticipated impact.
- **Introduction to the Organization or Individual applying:** A description of past and present operations, showing ability to carry out the program, including information on all previous grants from the U.S. Embassy and/or U.S. government agencies.
- **Project Justification:** Clear, concise and well-supported statement of the problem to be addressed and why the proposed program is needed
- **Project Goals and Objectives:** The “goals” describe what the program is intended to achieve. What aspect of the relationship between the U.S. and XXX will be improved? The “objectives” refer to the intermediate accomplishments on the way to the goals. These should be achievable and measurable.
- **Project Activities:** Describe the program activities and how they will help achieve the objectives.
- **Project Methods and Design:** A description of how the program is expected to work to solve the stated problem and achieve the goal.
- **Proposed Project Schedule:** The proposed timeline for the program activities. Include the dates, times, and locations of planned activities and events.
- **Key Personnel:** Names, titles, roles and experience/qualifications of key personnel involved in the program. What proportion of their time will be used in support of this program?
- **Project Partners:** List the names and type of involvement of key partner organizations and sub-awardees.
- **Project Monitoring and Evaluation Plan:** This is an important part of successful grants. Throughout the timeframe of the grant, how will the activities be monitored to ensure they are happening in a timely manner, and how will the project be evaluated to make sure it is meeting the goals of the grant?
- **Future Funding or Sustainability** Applicant’s plan for continuing the program beyond the grant period, or the availability of other resources, if applicable.

3. Budget Justification Narrative: After filling out the SF-424A Budget (above), use a separate sheet of paper to describe each of the budget expenses in detail. See section *H. Other Information: Guidelines for Budget Submissions* below for further information.

4. Attachments:

- 1-page CV or resume of key personnel who are proposed for the program
- Letters of support from program partners describing the roles and responsibilities of each partner
- Official permission letters, if required for program activities

3. Unique Entity ID and System for Award Management (SAM.gov)

Required Registrations:

All organizations applying for grants (except individuals) must obtain these registrations. All are free of charge:

- Unique Entity ID (UEI)
- Registration in SAM.gov

Apply for Unique Entity ID, followed by Entity Registration in SAM.gov

<https://sam.gov/content/entity-registration>

SAM registration must be renewed annually.

When you apply, select for your purpose of registration: “Financial Assistance Awards Only”. Do not select financial assistance from the Department of Defense (DoD).

4. Submission Dates and Times

The Public Diplomacy Section will accept proposals throughout the year and will review proposals according to the following schedule:

- Proposals received between October 1, 2022 and March 31, 2023 will be reviewed by *April 15, with responses going out by April 30, 2023*
- Proposals received between April 1 and July 31, 2023 will be reviewed by *August 15, with responses going out by August 31, 2023.*

5. Funding Restrictions

Award funds cannot be used for construction, vehicle purchases, alcoholic beverages.

6. Other Submission Requirements

All application materials must be submitted by email to BucharestPDGrants@state.gov

All documents must be sent as attachments to the email. Please DO NOT send .rar, zip, google docs, we transfer, or similar.

E. APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

1. Criteria

Each application will be evaluated and rated on the basis of the evaluation criteria outlined below. The criteria listed are closely related and are considered as a whole in judging the overall quality of an application.

Quality and Feasibility of the Project Idea: The project idea is well developed, with detail about how program activities will be carried out. The proposal includes a reasonable implementation timeline.

Ability to achieve project objectives: Goals and objectives are clearly stated and project approach is likely to provide maximum impact in achieving the proposed results.

Institution’s record and capacity: The organization has expertise in its stated field and PDS is confident of its ability to undertake the project. This includes a financial management system and a bank account.

Monitoring and Evaluation: Applicant demonstrates ability to measure project success against key indicators and provide milestones to indicate progress toward goals outlined in the proposal. The project includes output and outcome indicators and shows how and when those will be measured.

Cost Effectiveness: The budget justification is detailed. Costs are reasonable in relation to the proposed activities and anticipated results. The budget is realistic, accounting for all necessary expenses to achieve proposed activities.

Sustainability: Project activities will continue to have positive impact after the end of the project.

2. Review and Selection Process

A Grants Review Committee will evaluate all eligible applications.

3. FAPIIS

For any Federal award under a notice of funding opportunity, if the Federal awarding agency anticipates that the total Federal share will be greater than the simplified acquisition threshold on any Federal award under a notice of funding opportunity may include, over the period of performance (see §200.88 Simplified Acquisition Threshold), this section must also inform applicants:

- i. That the Federal awarding agency, prior to making a Federal award with a total amount of Federal share greater than the simplified acquisition threshold, is required to review and consider any information about the applicant that is in the designated integrity and performance system accessible through SAM (currently FAPIIS) (see 41 U.S.C. 2313);
- ii. That an applicant, at its option, may review information in the designated integrity and performance systems accessible through SAM and comment on any information about itself that a Federal awarding agency previously entered and is currently in the designated integrity and performance system accessible through SAM;
- iii. That the Federal awarding agency will consider any comments by the applicant, in addition to the other information in the designated integrity and performance system, in making a judgment about the applicant's integrity, business ethics, and record of performance under Federal awards when completing the review of risk posed by applicants as described in §200.205 Federal awarding agency review of risk posed by applicants.

F. FEDERAL AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

1. Federal Award Notices

The grant award will be written, signed, awarded, and administered by the Grants Officer. The assistance award agreement is the authorizing document and it will be provided to the recipient for review and signature by email. The recipient may only start incurring project expenses beginning on the start date shown on the grant award document signed by the Grants Officer.

If a proposal is selected for funding, the Department of State has no obligation to provide any additional future funding. Renewal of an award to increase funding or extend the period of performance is at the discretion of the Department of State.

Issuance of this NOFO does not constitute an award commitment on the part of the U.S. government, nor does it commit the U.S. government to pay for costs incurred in the preparation and submission of proposals. Further, the U.S. government reserves the right to reject any or all proposals received.

Payment Method: Payments will be made in at least two installments, as needed to carry out the project activities.

Organizations whose applications will not be funded will also be notified *via email*.

2. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

Terms and Conditions: Before submitting an application, applicants should review all the terms and conditions and required certifications which will apply to this award, to ensure that they will be able to comply. These include:

2 CFR 200, 2 CFR 600, Certifications and Assurances, and the Department of State Standard Terms and Conditions, all of which are available at: <https://www.state.gov/about-us-office-of-the-procurement-executive/>. Note the U.S Flag branding and marking requirements in the Standard Terms and Conditions.

3. Reporting

Reporting Requirements: Recipients will be required to submit financial reports and program reports. The award document will specify how often these reports must be submitted.

G. FEDERAL AWARDING AGENCY CONTACTS

If you have any questions about the grant application process, please contact PDS at: bucharestpdgrants@state.gov

Note: We do not provide any pre-consultation for application related questions that are addressed in the NOFO. Once an application has been submitted, State Department officials and staff — both in the Department and at embassies overseas — may not discuss this competition with applicants until the entire proposal review process is completed.

H. OTHER INFORMATION

Guidelines for Budget Justification

Personnel: Describe the wages, salaries, and benefits of temporary or permanent staff who will be working directly for the applicant on the program, and the percentage of their time that will be spent on the project.

Travel: Estimate the costs of travel and per diem for this project. If the project involves international travel, include a brief statement of justification for that travel.

Equipment: Describe any machinery, furniture, or other personal property that is required for the project, which has a useful life of more than one year (or a life longer than the duration of the program), and costs at least \$5,000 per unit.

Supplies: List and describe all the items and materials, including any computer devices, that are needed for the project. If an item costs more than \$5,000 per unit, then put it in the budget under Equipment.

Contractual: Describe goods and services that the applicant plans to acquire through a contract with a vendor. Also describe any sub-awards to non-profit partners that will help carry out the project activities.

Other Direct Costs: Describe other costs directly associated with the project, which do not fit in the other categories. For example, shipping costs for materials and equipment or applicable taxes. All “Other” or “Miscellaneous” expenses must be itemized and explained.

Indirect Costs: These are costs that cannot be linked directly to the project activities, such as overhead costs needed to help keep the organization operating. If your organization has a Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate (NICRA) and includes NICRA charges in the budget, attach a copy of your latest NICRA. Organizations that have never had a NICRA may request indirect costs of 10% of the modified total direct costs as defined in 2 CFR 200.68.

“Cost Sharing” refers to contributions from the organization or other entities other than the U.S. Embassy. It also includes in-kind contributions such as volunteers’ time and donated venues.

Alcoholic Beverages: Please note that award funds cannot be used for alcoholic beverages.